



Room to Grow Flint & Genesee County's Economy

The growing Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce commissioned FUNchitecture to help with space planning and consolidation/adaptive reuse efforts. A local bank vacated a prime second floor position in the prominent Mott Foundation Building in downtown Flint, directly adjacent to the Chamber's longtime offices in the Commerce Building next door. The Chamber worked with FUNchitecture to investigate whether a portion of their off-site programs and services would fit in the vacated bank space. By using creative space planning, the Chamber was able to consolidate 4,800 SF less in real estate costs and duplication of phone, internet, receptionist, furnishings and travel expenses from their bottom line. This was attributed to FUNchitecture's smart planning efforts, creative space manipulation and FUNctional adaptive reuse experience when turning the previous bank space into FUNky new Chamber headquarter offices.



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C A S E S T U D Y

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The previous teller counters were removed and the octagonal space retrofitted with a ceiling, etched glass walls and new furnishings, turning it into a fabulous new conference room. The previous vault room was gutted and turned into a staff work and copy room for supply storage accessible to everyone. Worn and outdated carpet was replaced with new custom carpet that mimicks the art deco arch design on the ceiling of the space and highlights the Chamber's new branding colors. Two layers of existing ceiling were removed from the eastern most office area, gaining 4+' of ceiling height. This also exposed upper transom windows that allow for more natural daylight into the space, especially following the demolition of Genesee Towers, a 17 story building next door. Visitors enter the space using an historic escalator centered in the Chamber's new lobby. As visitors enter, they quickly get the essence of the Chamber's new branding campaign "see what's possible" with the logo on stand-off lettering on a partial-height screen wall separating the economic development staff from the lobby and a scrolling TV monitor with images of the county's finest businesses, attractions and destinations. New pendant banners were hung high upon on the art deco columns



in the space with colorful imagery of the Chamber's member graphics, photos and imagery. The Chamber's many departments are now organized with staff from each respective department sitting together. Each department has task chairs color coded according to the branding colors designed by the Chamber's marketing department. Collaborative work areas for cross-department innovation are situated near entire walls made of whiteboards and tackable surfaces which are delineated by comfy entablature arm chairs where impromptu meetings over coffee can occur daily, if not hourly. In order to accommodate future growth, a second floor mezzanine was gutted, cleaned, retrofitted with new windows, new HVAC and new furnishings to accommodate the Chamber's growing staff. Improved response times and better cross-department collaboration has netted more members and better services. A stellar visitor and convention bureau, impressive strides in economic development for the region, and a highly touted and award winning youth development and employment program are the results of the Chamber's impressive vision and FUNchitecture's creative and FUNctional design services.

